A MODERN HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING.

A MODERN high-school building is an epitome of the educational progress that has taken place in this country within a generation. We of middle age recall the type of high-school house that prevailed when we attended school. It was a plain building with a large assembly-room in which the whole school was usually seated for study. Grouped about this room and opening from it were smaller rooms for recitation. These were furnished with plain settees, and blackboards occupied the wall space on the sides. A crude map or two, a globe, and a plain chair and table for the teacher, usually completed the equipment. As a rule, the building was heated with stoves, but hot-air furnaces were occasionally to be found in the best. Ventilation was supplied by opening windows, and at times pupils had fifty cubic feet of fresh air a minute at freezing temperature; at other times two or three, or perhaps none. There was little or no attention given to proper sanitation, and no provision was made for physical training.

The studies offered were chiefly linguistic and mathematical. The linguistic studies were those of the vernacular and the classics; the mathematics embraced higher arithmetic, a small amount of algebra, and a book or two of plane geometry. The courses were narrow and rigid. The sciences, modern languages, history, and the study of music and art had little, if any, recognition in the curriculum.

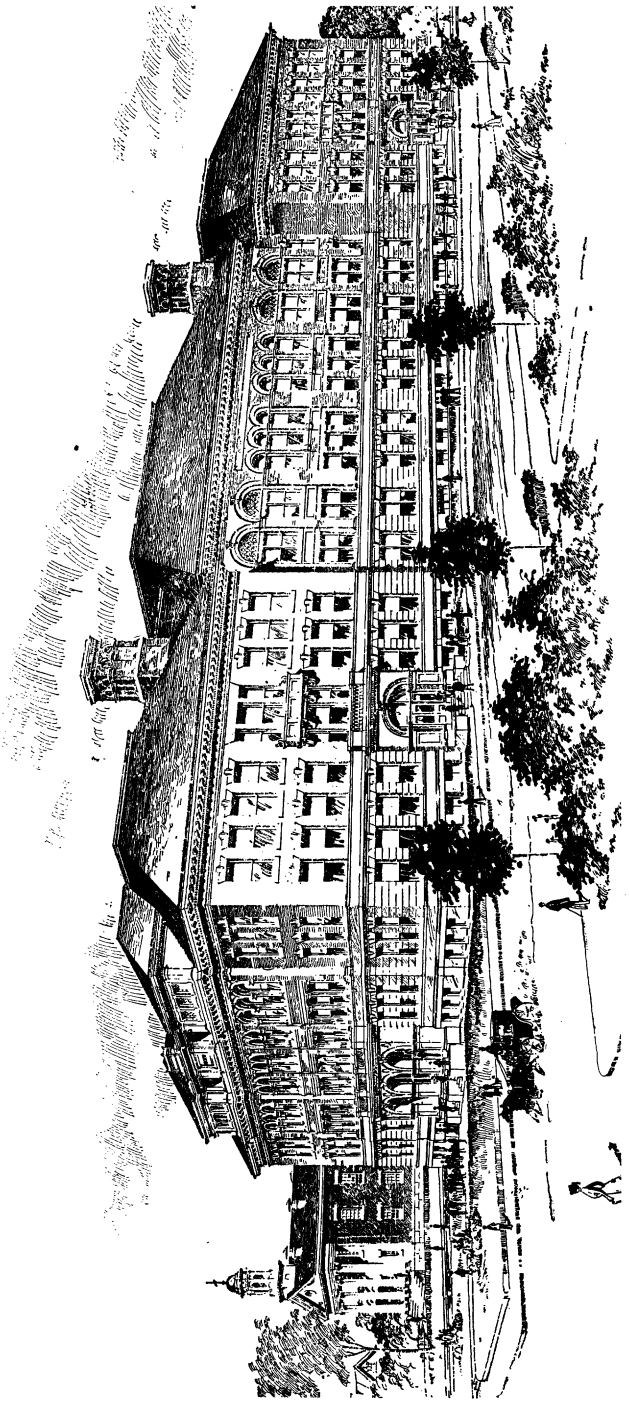
The idea of giving instruction in manual training and in the domestic arts in the schools had not been dreamed of by the most visionary of teachers. It is much less than twenty years ago when many of those who now are the strongest advocates of such instruction scouted the idea and opposed it with pen and speech on every occasion.

The number of high schools in the country a generation ago was small, and the attendance in those that existed was limited. Of those who entered, few boys especially remained to graduate,

unless they intended to enter college and prepare for one of the liberal professions. Herbert Spencer said of England, in 1861, that had there been no teaching but that given in the public schools she would now be what she was in the feudal times, and that all her industries would cease were it not for that information which men begin to acquire as they best may after their education is said to be finished. This criticism would have applied to the high schools and higher institutions of this country at that time, if not with equal force at least to a great degree.

But agencies were at work even then that were to revolutionize the processes of public education. The elementary schools first felt their influences, and the higher schools, though resisting them longer, were forced to yield. The old course of instruction, narrow in scope and rigid in its adherence to tradition, was foreign to the spirit of the American people. It failed to prepare the youth of the nation to enter its commercial and industrial life properly equipped to meet its requirements, and attracted to the higher schools but a small percentage of those who were looking forward to become merchants, manufacturers, engineers, and the like.

The rapid growth of the country and its wonderful industrial and commercial expansion, with its attendant increase in wealth, has multiplied the number of high schools in the country from hundreds to thousands; has brought into existence technical schools of various kinds; and has enabled the older universities to offer, besides their courses in the liberal arts, those which prepare directly for the practical pursuits of life. It is now incumbent upon high schools to offer courses that fit their pupils to enter these various courses now offered by the higher institutions. They must also provide courses varying in character for that large number of pupils who do not intend to enter higher institutions, or else they fail lamentably to meet the spirit of the times and the wants of the people. Moreover, the hygienic provisions made in the past for school buildings will not satisfy public demands of today. These, and other things upon which I shall not enter here, tend to increase the relative cost of a modern building over one of even twenty years ago.



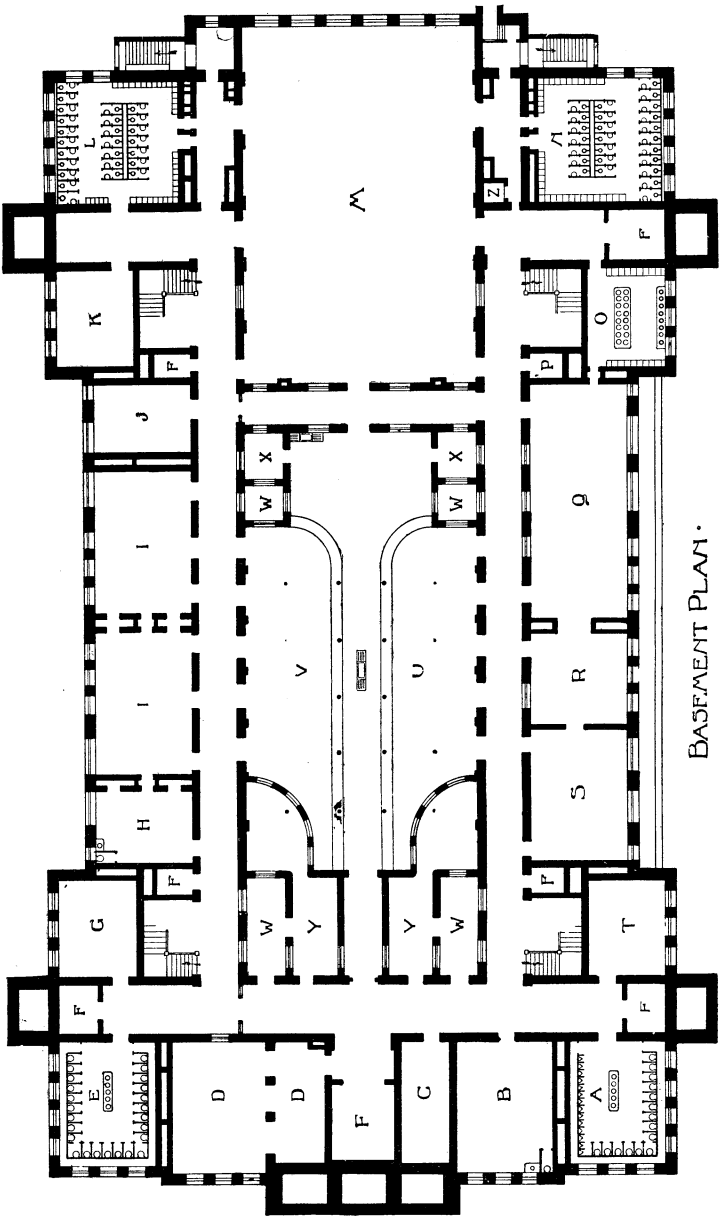
THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

A building, to accommodate a thousand pupils today, must be much larger than one that would have been considered large enough for the same number of pupils in the past, and not only must it be larger, but it must be better.

Many taxpayers fail to appreciate the great changes that have taken place in educational affairs as well as they do those that have occurred in industrial life. They do not see the necessity for the erection of school buildings that are so much larger than was needed for the same number of pupils when they attended school; they look upon the provisions for the physical training of pupils and outlay for many of the hygienic improvements as sheer extravagance; they regard many of the new departures in education as fads and frills; they look upon the money expended for artistic adornment of the buildings as a scheme of the architect to increase his commissions, or one of the city officials to secure a rake-off.

Hence, there arises frequently an opposition that prevents in the erection of school buildings that wise and far-seeing policy that will insure for the schools those opportunities that will be of immeasurable value to the community. There can be no more productive expenditure of public money by the American people than that which gives its youth the fullest educational opportunities. And wise is that community which, following the example of the progressive manufacturer who relegates to the scrap-heap machinery that no longer can compete on equal terms with the more modern, keeps its educational machinery apace with the most enlightened thought of the age.

The city whose educational interests I have had the honor to direct for many years has a high-school building that was erected in 1874. It is an excellent type of the schoolhouse of that period. The building is 95 feet front, and the main body of the building 95 feet deep. The rear of the main building expands into two wings 8 feet wide by 35 feet deep, making the extreme width of the back of the building 111 feet. It contains seventeen rooms that can be used for class and recitation purposes, including a physical and a chemical laboratory, both situated in the basement; it contains an assembly hall that will


BASEMENT PLAN.

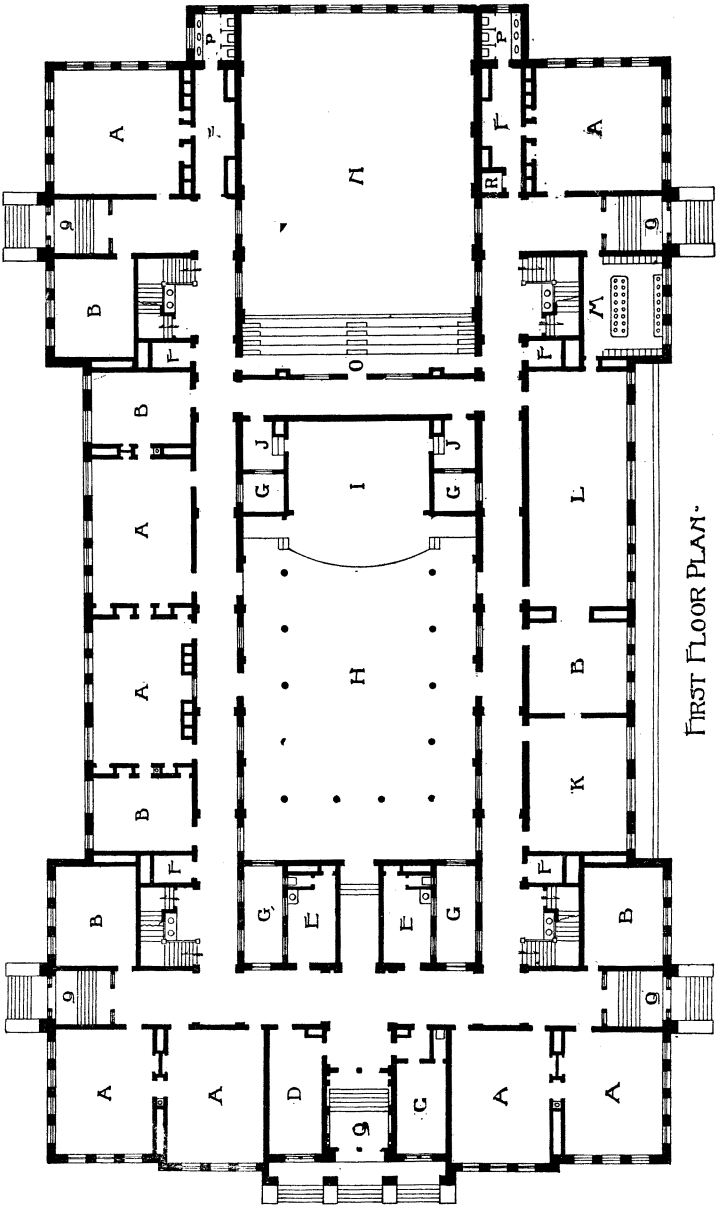
seat 600 persons, a principal's room, dressing-room for teachers, and clothes-rooms for the pupils. It is heated by steam and fairly well ventilated. With the narrow and rigid course of study that prevailed thirty years ago, it would accommodate five hundred pupils — the present number in attendance — without crowding. But with elective courses, the introduction of a commercial course, and the extension of the art and scientific studies, it is inadequate even with the assembly hall divided for class use. It has no provision for physical or manual training, no library, no lecture-rooms, and is wanting in other requirements of modern education. I present this brief description of this building to show the radical departure in our proposed building, which to many seems extravagant in its comprehensiveness and detail.

THE PROPOSED NEW HIGH-SCHOOL HOUSE, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.
(SAMUEL C. HUNT, NEW BEDFORD, ARCHITECT.)

The building, the plan of which is shown by the accompanying cuts, is to be 321 feet long by 175 feet wide, and will contain 51,286 square feet of floor space. It is to be three stories above the basement. The first story is to be of Indiana limestone, and the stories above a light buff brick with trimmings of the same stone as the first story. It is planned to provide for one thousand pupils.

BASEMENT.

A — Boys' toilet-room.
B — Janitor's room.
C — Boys' bicycle-room.
D — Boys' recreation-room.
E — Girls' toilet-room.
F — Store rooms.
G — Girls' examination room.
H — Janitress' room.
I — Girls' recreation room.
J — Girls' bicycle-room.
K — Girls' dressing-room.
L — Girls' locker and bath-room.
M — Gymnasium.
N — Boys' locker and bath-room.
O — Boys' locker and wash-room.
P — Motor and fan-room.
Q — Manual-training room.
R — Recitation room.
S — Spare room for manual training.
T — Boys' examination room.
U — Boys' lunch-room.
V — Girls' lunch room.
W — Light shafts.
X — Closets.
Y — Fan-room.
Z — Elevator.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

FIRST-FLOOR PLAN.

A — Class-rooms.
B — Recitation room.
C — Reception room.
D — Cloak-room.
E — Teachers' rooms.
F — Wardrobes.
G — Light shafts.
H — Assembly hall.
I — Stage.
J — Dressing-rooms.
K — Museum.
L — Manual training.
M — Locker and wash-room.
N — Gymnasium.
O — Gallery.
P — Toilet-rooms.
Q — Vestibules.
R — Elevator.

SECOND-FLOOR PLAN.

A — Class-rooms.
B — Recitation rooms.
C — Physical laboratories.
D — Secretary's room.
E — Library.
F — Head master's room.
G — Wardrobes.
H — Conservatory.
I — Teachers' rooms.
J — Light shafts.
K — Store-rooms.
L — Instructors' rooms.
M — Apparatus rooms.
N — Emergency room.
O — Lecture-room.
P — Manual training.
Q — Locker and wash-room.
R — Biological laboratories.
S — Toilet-rooms.
T — Galleries.
U — Upper part assembly hall.
V — Elevator.

THIRD-FLOOR PLAN.

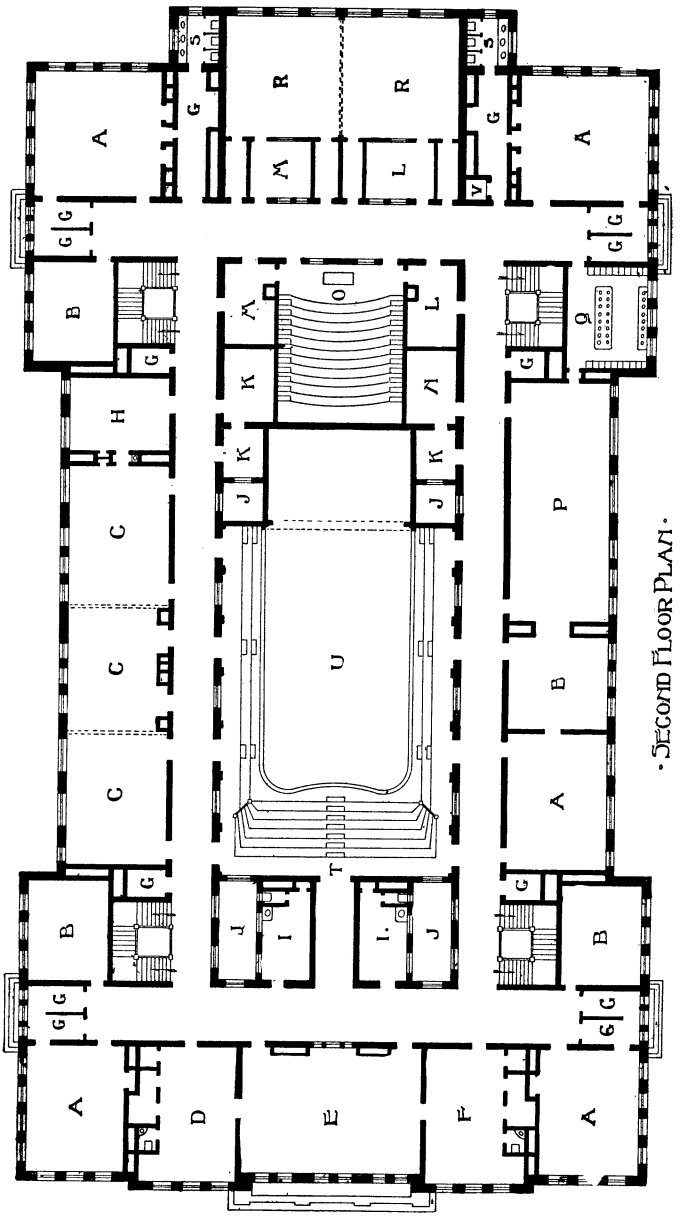
A — Class-rooms.
B — Recitation rooms.
C — Chemical laboratories.
D — Senior class-room.
E — Teachers' rooms.
F — Light shafts.
G — Wardrobes.
H — Drawing-room.
I — Manual training.
J — Locker and wash-room.
K — Toilet-rooms.
L — Sewing-room.
M — Kitchen.
O — Store-rooms.
P — Instructors' rooms.
Q — Model-room.
S — Upper part lecture-room.
T — Locker-room.
U — Elevator.
V — Roof over assembly hall.

A partial summary of the rooms in the building given below brings out some of its salient features:

1. A gymnasium and drill hall, 65 feet by 99 feet, two stories high, with running-track and galleries, dressing-rooms, and shower baths.

2. An assembly hall, with pitched floor, galleries on three sides, stage arrangement to seat between 250 and 300 pupils facing audience; capacity 1,500, exclusive of stage.

3. Manual-training group: 1 forge-room, 1 iron-working room, 1 wood-turning and pattern-making room, 1 sloyd- and general-carpentry room, 1 drafting-room.


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

4. Domestic science and physiology group: 1 kitchen, 1 sewing- and dress-cutting room, 1 physiology room.

5. Science group: 1 triple laboratory with folding partitions, 26 by 150 feet, for physical science; 1 double laboratory with folding partitions, 26 by 70 feet for biology; 1 conservatory; 1 double laboratory with folding partitions, 26 by 70 feet for chemical science; 1 dark-room for photography; 1 lecture-room between physical and biological science groups, near center building, raised seats, capacity 125 to 150 pupils.

6. Commercial group: 2 bookkeeping, stenography, and banking rooms; 1 typewriting room.

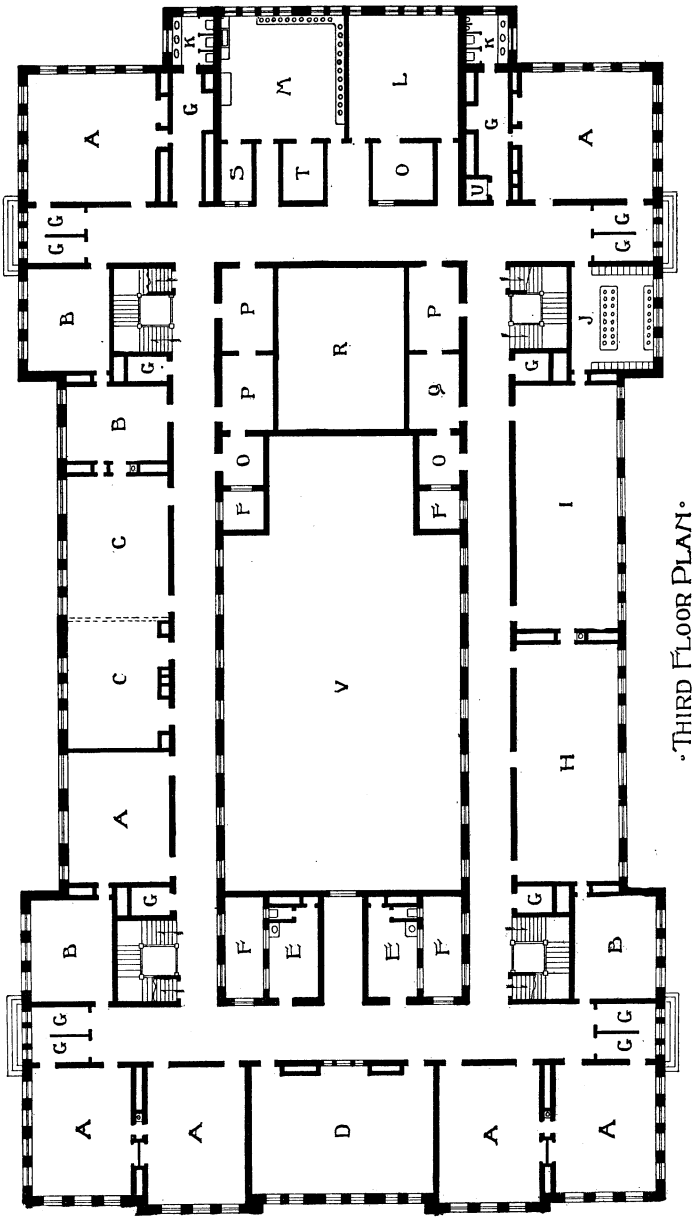
7. There are 17 class-rooms seating 48 pupils each, 12 recitation-rooms seating 25 pupils each, and 2 class-rooms seating 75 or 80 pupils each.

8. Some other special features are: a museum, an observatory, and a hospital room.

The building will contain sixty-eight rooms, exclusive of toilet-rooms, locker-rooms, and closets. The rooms and corridor floors and stair treads will be terraza, the stairways iron, and plate glass will be used for the windows.

The building, if constructed as planned (and it undoubtedly will be), if no modifications are made in the material first called for, will cost when equipped about $750,000 without the lot. The lowest bid of the contractors was $679,225. The contract has not yet been awarded.

The method adopted by the city council in preparing plans for this building is so unusual that it is worth presenting. Unfortunately in the erection of school buildings those who are to administer the school for which the building is designed have little or no voice in planning and equipping it. Not so in this case. When the city council authorized the erection of the building and the architect was chosen, an advisory committee, consisting of several members of the school committee, the superintendent of schools, the principal of the high school, and two other citizens not connected with any city body, was appointed to act with the committee of the city council in passing upon plans that should be submitted. This committee was allowed full vote in the selection and adoption of plans. The superintendent and principal were asked to submit the number and kind of rooms they desired, and their location, which they did. Ample means were given them for investigation in connection



THIRD FLOOR PLAN.

with the architect. He received and acted upon their suggestions in such a manner as to win their entire approval. The plans when prepared were duly considered by the whole committee, and, after many meetings and free discussion with the architect, adopted as they stand.

The ideas that dominated from the first in the creation of the plan adopted have been utility, comprehensiveness, and administrative economy. Its projectors are firm believers that it is educationally sound to have all departments — classical, scientific, commercial, and mechanic arts — under one administrative roof, whenever possible. They have tried to group all related departments in the building, that they may be administered with the least loss of time and energy to both teachers and pupils; and they feel that they have been moderately successful.

The cost may seem excessive for a building to accommodate only one thousand pupils and for a city of 70,000 inhabitants, though it is growing. But the eight-hour working day which prevails here now, and the high cost of material at the present time, add some 33 per cent. to what the cost of the building would have been a few years ago.

It is intended to make this building an educational center for the whole city. With that idea the assembly hall was placed on the ground floor, with theater plan, and the construction made large enough to accommodate a popular audience.

WM. E. HATCH.

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE.
New Bedford, Mass.